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## U S S R - C U B A - U . S .

## GROMYKO FIRMLY REJECTS "FALSEHOODS" ON SOVIET, CUBAN POLICIES

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's General Assembly speech represents the second time Moscow has authoritatively addressed the issue of a Soviet combat brigade in Cuba. His remarks on the campaign of "falsehoods" concerning Soviet and Cuban policies mark the first notable departure from the parallelism between Moscow's handling of this issue and its October 1970 treatment of the question of a Soviet submarine base on the island.\* The tone of finality and the prominent placement of the remarks on Cuba served to throw into sharp relief an unyielding posture before the international community. But Gromyko also used the occasion to reaffirm the importance for international stability of the Soviet-U.S. relationship, a subject that he discussed in a separate section toward the other end of his address. He stated the USSR's desire to have "normal, and what is more, friendly relations" with the United States, adding that concern for Soviet-U.S. relations is a "matter for both sides."

Gromyko's remarks on the Cuban issue, highlighted in TASS' summary of the 25 September speech, came after his opening comments contrasting the policies of states seeking detente with those spreading "myths" about "unavoidable war." He rejected efforts by "politicians and quasipoliticians" to make people believe "fictitious stories about the source of a threat to peace," citing as an example the "campaign launched with regard to Cuba" and Cuban and Soviet policies. He did not acknowledge the specifics of the issue--the presence of a Soviet combat brigade in Cuba--in adding that the USSR and Cuba had already declared such "propaganda" to be "without foundation in reality and indeed based on falsehoods." With the implication that further discussion with the United States would be fruitless, Gromyko said "our advice on this score is simple: The artificiality of this entire question must be honestly admitted and the matter closed." He added the assurance that the Soviet Union and "other countries of the socialist community" have not threatened and are not threatening anyone; the 11 September PRAVDA editorial article, Moscow's only other authoritative statement on the issue, had more specifically asserted that neither by size nor function did the "Soviet military personnel" in Cuba present any threat to the United States or other states.

\* The similarity in the authoritative statements--this year's PRAVDA editorial article and the 1970 TASS statement--and subsequent commentary is discussed in the TRENDS of 12 September 1979, pages 1-5, and 19 September 1979, pages 11-12.

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In contrast, Gromyko's brief reference to the Cuban issue of the day in his October 1970 UN General Assembly address came almost as an afterthought in the middle of a long discourse on the Middle East. After decrying allegations that the Soviet Union had violated terms of the cease-fire agreement in the Middle East, Gromyko remarked that "likewise, with no grounds whatsoever, a propaganda campaign has been mounted about some kind of invented Soviet arrangements in Cuba allegedly jeopardizing the security of the United States." He dismissed "this fabrication" as having "fallen flat too," and went on to state that if there were really a desire to build relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of confidence, "then there must be no room for any falsity in foreign policy."

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